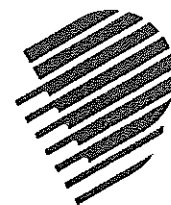




STATE OF CONNECTICUT
COUNCIL ON DEVELOPMENTAL DISABILITIES



Public Hearing
Joint Committee on Government Administration and Elections
Friday, March 2, 2012
Testimony

IN FAVOR OF: Section 45 of HB 5027: AN ACT IMPLEMENTING THE GOVERNOR'S BUDGET RECOMMENDATIONS CONCERNING THE ELIMINATION, CONSOLIDATION AND MODIFICATION OF VARIOUS BOARDS AND COMMISSIONS.

Good morning. My name is Frank Reed and I reside in Danbury Connecticut. I am the Chair of the CT Council on Developmental Disabilities and I am here today to testify in support of Section 45 of HB 5027 establishing the CT Council on Developmental Disabilities.

Section 45 officially establishes the CT Council on Developmental Disabilities in state statute. The Ct Council on Developmental Disabilities has been in existence in Connecticut for 40 years. We are a Governor appointed Council of people with disabilities, parents of children with disabilities, state agency representatives and providers. The Council is fully federally funded through the Administration on Developmental Disabilities to implement the Developmental Disabilities Act. Our mission is to promote the full inclusion of people with disabilities into their communities. We implement our mission through initiatives funded with our federal dollars, training, and information dissemination. Examples of our efforts include the Able Lives video series about people with disabilities, produced in partnership with CPTV; funding of an Aging in Place initiative to develop a model to assist persons with developmental disabilities to age in their own communities; and Partners in Policymaking training to develop self advocacy skills for people with disabilities and parents. Additionally, we

collaborate with our sister agencies, the Office of Protection and Advocacy and the University of Connecticut Center for Excellence in Developmental Disabilities. Our sister agencies are also funded through the Developmental Disabilities Act, and together the federal government recognizes us as the CT Developmental Disabilities Network.

To date, Connecticut has been the **ONLY STATE** that has not established its Council on Developmental Disabilities through state statute or through Executive Order. DD Councils in every other state have received this official designation. Our authority came through a letter from Governor Thomas Meskill, identifying the agency that is now DDS as our officially designated state agency. The DD Act requires each state to identify a Designated State Agency to receive the funding and provide fiscal and administrative oversight. While the letter from Governor Meskill was updated by Governor O'Neill, and the designation of DDS as our state agency has continued, the Council never received authority through state statute. This bill will rectify the matter.

It should be noted that we do not receive ANY state funding, and pay 5% of our federal funds to DDS to offset their costs as our designated state agency. DDS offers space and administrative and fiscal support to the Council.

Additionally, this bill is in compliance with membership and other requirements of the DD Council as stated in the Federal DD ACT. We are very pleased that the Governor has chosen to support our efforts through this bill, and feel that this official designation was long overdue in Connecticut. This bill reinforces the fact that the Council's work is important in improving the lives of people with developmental disabilities in our state, and I urge you to support the statutory designation of the CT Council on Developmental Disabilities.

Thank you.

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